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Man charged in death of alleged accomplice in brazen daytime home invasion, Arlington Heights police say

By KAREN ANN CULLOTTA
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A Tennessee man is facing murder charges in connection with a brazen daytime Arlington Heights home invasion that left the suspect's accomplice shot dead by the homeowner, authorities said Tuesday.

Bradley J. Finnan, 38, of Chattanooga, Tenn., was charged Tuesday with felony murder and home invasion after allegedly being one of two armed men who tricked their way into a home Saturday afternoon in the 2400 block of North Evergreen Avenue, a house authorities said the pair had targeted.



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Finnan was ordered held in Cook County Jail without bail following a bond hearing Tuesday at the courthouse in Rolling Meadows.



Bradley J. Finnan, 38, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, was charged with murder on April 6, 2020, in connection with a home invasion in Arlington Heights, that left the other suspect dead of a gunshot wound.(Arlington Heights Police / Pioneer Press)

Police said Finnan and an accomplice, Larry D. Brodacz, 58, of Buffalo Grove, [who was shot to death by a male resident during the home invasion](#), intended to rob the homeowners at gunpoint in what investigators said was a planned crime and not a random act of violence.

According to court records obtained from the Cook County state's attorney's office, Brodacz and Finnan's crime scheme was hatched in part to coincide with the state's stay-at-home order issued by Gov. J.B. Pritzker last month to help prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

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Brodacz and Finnan, who had met through their work as car salesmen, arrived at the Arlington Heights home in Brodacz's 2016 Lexus, walking up to the front door wearing baseball hats, gloves and surgical-type face masks, according to the court documents.

From the moment the two approached the stately, two-story home, the crime was recorded by the residents' home surveillance video camera, with the video later posted anonymously on a website known for its sensational content, authorities said.

As the pair approached the house, which was occupied by a 50-year-old man, his 48-year-old wife and their two children, ages 11 and 14, the home's Ring doorbell video camera shows Finnan holding a bag later found to contain zip ties and a blowtorch, court records show.

After Brodacz tries the doorknob, knocks and sees the Ring camera, he can be heard telling Finnan not to look at the camera, before ringing the bell, court documents show.



Warning: Graphic language. Home surveillance video shows a home invasion incident in Arlington Heights on April 4, 2020. (Arlington Heights Police Department)



The homeowner allegedly told police he heard a knock at the door and the doorbell ring, and, believing it was his landscapers, he opened the door, authorities said. Then, Brodacz and Finnan pushed their way inside, according to authorities.

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Telling the man they were police officers, Brodacz and Finnan then allegedly pulled weapons from their pockets, prompting a struggle between the male homeowner and Finnan, with the fight ending in the front of the home, before Finnan fled the scene, according to authorities.

The wife told police she heard screaming and saw two men with guns in her foyer, according to authorities. She ran upstairs to the home's second floor, with Brodacz chasing her, authorities said.

Reaching the bedroom where her children were, Brodacz broke through the closed door, grabbed the couple's son and daughter, pushed them down on a bed and pointed his gun at them, police said.

When their mother tried to intervene, police said Brodacz pointed his gun at her and pushed her to the floor, where she pleaded with him not to shoot them.

Brodacz left the room when he heard the man calling out his wife's name inside of the home, according to authorities. Meanwhile, the man had gotten his wife's gun from the master bedroom, police said.

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While in the master bedroom, Brodacz hit the man in the back of the head with some kind of blunt object, one he told police he thought was a gun. The two struggled and the male homeowner fired his wife's gun but didn't hit Brodacz, police said.

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At some point during the struggle, Brodacz lost his gun but pulled a knife from his waistband, the man told police.

Authorities said that as Brodacz advanced on the man, armed with the knife, the man used his wife's gun to shoot Brodacz in the abdomen. Police said the couple's 14-year-old called 911.

Brodacz was pronounced dead at the scene and the Cook County medical examiner's office later ruled the death a homicide.

Arlington Heights police arrived shortly after Finnan fled, and found the wife in front of the family's home, screaming that her husband was fighting someone with a gun inside of the house.

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The quiet neighborhood on the north side of the village was soon teaming with law enforcement, including a SWAT team, and officers with the Northern Illinois Police Alarm System and the Major Case Assistance Team.

Arlington Heights police officers found in the home's master bedroom two 9mm cartridge cases, a knife, a .25 caliber semi-automatic handgun loaded with seven, .25 caliber rounds, and the wife's 9mm handgun.

Finnan, who had left the home in Brodacz's Lexus, was found by police early Sunday morning at his mother's home in Rockford.

Finnan allegedly told police he knew Brodacz through previous employment at a car dealership, and after Brodacz told him about the plan to rob the house, he boarded a bus in Tennessee and headed to Buffalo Grove.

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According to police, Finnan said Brodacz — who authorities said had previously been charged with crimes including home invasions dating back to the 1980s — claimed to have seen about \$200,000 in cash in boxes in the man's home around 20 years ago and thought money might still be there.

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Under Illinois' felony murder law, homicide charges can be filed when someone is killed during the course of a crime even if the death was caused by someone else and the person charged with murder did not intend for the person to die.

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Karen Ann Cullotta is a suburban reporter covering education, municipal government and human interest stories. A graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, when Karen's not reporting, she can usually be found cooking Italian food, digging in her vegetable garden and hanging out with her family.

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